

Mediterranean Port City Identity: The Walls of Galata and Their Spatial Impacts

The Galata Region, situated southwest of the Bosphorus, has evolved as a harbor settlement since antiquity. The founding of the Genoese settlement in 1267 made it a significant hub within the commerce network between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, maintaining its status as a port city until the 1980s. Similar to other Mediterranean cities, the Galata Region was encircled by walls that conformed to the region's natural topography, serving both defense and commercial endeavors. The piers and ports of Galata were integrated into the urban structure by wall gates, which open to zones of concentrated commercial activity. Nonetheless, during the zoning activities that commenced in the 1950s, the walls and gates were expropriated, resulting in substantial alterations to the walls and urban fabric with the construction of expansive boulevards. Since the 1980s, policies aimed at relocating industrial zones from urban centers and infrastructure initiatives designed to address transportation challenges have progressively diminished Galata's identity as a port city. Additionally, coastal interventions post-2011 and the construction of the Golden Horn Metro Bridge have significantly obliterated the remaining vestiges of the walls and gates. This study looks at how these factors changed the shape of cities by examining how Galata's walls and gates were related to trade using old maps and observations made in the field.

Keywords: *Galata Region, Galata City Wall, Istanbul, Port City, Historical Maps*

Introduction

Galata has been an important port settlement throughout history, both regionally and internationally. Galata Port, operational from the—as far as is known today—7th century BC until the 1950s, has played a central role in terms of trade and diplomacy for centuries. The port's spatial configuration was shaped by the geographical location and topographical characteristics of the region, hence considerably impacting the city's morphological development. Under the influence of Genoese commerce, Galata adopted the characteristics of a Medieval Mediterranean city and was encircled by walls as a necessity of this identity. But the fast urbanization that happened around the world between 1950 and 1980, along with neoliberal policies, made the Galata Port dysfunctional and eventually disappeared. Consequently, the port-connected urban fabric underwent significant changes.

The objective of the study is to examine the trade-related roles of the walls and gates in Galata using historical maps and on-site observations and to question the current condition of these elements. The research adopts an urban morphology-centered perspective to analyze how functional changes in port cities influence the transformation of urban space. The impact of walls and gates on urban morphology is analyzed through changes in urban blocks and street configurations during important periods of reconstruction activities in Galata. This evaluation clarifies the

1 dual role of the walls and gates in the region's defense and trade. The influence of
2 the walls and gates on urban morphology enhances comprehension of the region's
3 historical structure. The alterations in the modern urban structure of city walls,
4 significant to the collective history of Mediterranean port cities, are examined via
5 historical and spatial dimensions.

8 **Literature Review**

10 Ports serve as global networks that intensively exchange not only goods but
11 also social, cultural, and intellectual phenomena (Hein, (Hein C. , Oil Spaces: The
12 Global Petroleumscape in the Rotterdam/ the Hague Area, 2018) 2011). Therefore,
13 they have had a complex interaction with cities throughout history (Xu et al., 2025).
14 As cities support maritime activities, port development has enriched these areas (He
15 et al., 2024; Hesse, 2018).

16 Port cities are intricate regions shaped by diverse physical elements, owing to
17 their distinctive social dynamics, changing environmental conditions, and the
18 continual flow of individuals and goods (Rossetto et al., 2021). The interaction
19 between the port and the urban form is based on the initial settlement of that city
20 and directly affects the form of the city. Hoyle (1989), proposed the existence of a
21 transition zone between port activities and urban areas, concentrating on the port-
22 city interface in his study. Industrialization, globalization, and zoning initiatives
23 have substantially altered interactions at this interface over time (Hein, 2011, 2016,
24 2018; Schubert, 2018). The formal structure of these alterations will be evidenced
25 through the analysis of urban morphology utilizing research methodologies.

26 Morphological studies regard urban structure as a time phenomenon and build
27 analytical tools based on this viewpoint. Urban morphology, which encapsulates the
28 alterations undergone during the development of cities, illustrates the impact of
29 these transitions (Conzen, 2004). This discipline methodically investigates the
30 constructed environment of urban areas, including their origins, morphology,
31 layout, architecture, and functions, while analyzing their developmental process
32 throughout time (Madanipour, 1996).

33 In the examination of urban morphology, form, resolution, and time constitute
34 three fundamental elements. Form delineates the solid-void ratio of the constructed
35 environment and their interrelation; resolution encompasses several In the
36 examination of urban morphology, form, resolution, and time constitute three
37 fundamental elements. Form delineates the solid-empty ratio of the constructed
38 environment and their interrelation; resolution encompasses several analytical levels
39 from the building to the regional scale; and time elucidates the evolution of urban
40 places across historical processes (Moudon, 1997). Comparative urban studies
41 provide novel and comprehensive evaluations of certain locations, events, or
42 circumstances (Rossetto et al., 2021). This analysis investigates the distinctions
43 between analogous circumstances across varying contexts (Ward, 2008).Urban
44 morphology significantly contributes to comprehending the influence of port
45 activities on urban development across various contexts by juxtaposing the
46 ostensibly incomparable (Rossetto et al., 2021). Levels from the building to the

1 regional scale, and time, elucidate the evolution of urban places across historical
 2 processes (Moudon, 1997). Comparative urban studies provide novel and
 3 comprehensive evaluations of certain locations, events, or circumstances (Rossetto
 4 et al., 2021). This analysis investigates the distinctions between analogous
 5 circumstances across varying contexts (Ward, 2008).

6 7 8 **Methodology/Materials**

9
10 The research analyzes the urban form of port-city areas. The formal evolution
 11 of Galata Port is analyzed using the historical-geographical technique, with
 12 historical maps serving as main sources (Conzen M., 1988; Knox and Pinch, 2006).
 13 The evolution of port activities in Galata, from inception to the present, is grounded
 14 in the historical milestones that have influenced these activities. Comparative
 15 studies of different stages (setting, expansion, specialization, and regionalization) of
 16 port cities' development since 1858 focus on things like city walls, city gates, roads,
 17 and buildings that are connected to them (Hein 2011, 2016, 2018; Schubert 2018).

18 Thirty-one high-quality historical maps of Galata from 1776 to 2001 were
 19 identified. Among these maps, four maps were selected for each diachronic stage,
 20 which allowed for a comprehensive analysis of Galata's morphology (Table 1). The
 21 fact that the maps were at scales of 1/2000, 1/1000, and 1/500, were survey-based
 22 drawings, and reflected basic parameters such as the harbor strip, street-city block,
 23 and walls-wall gates were important criteria in the selection process.

24
25 **Table 1.** *List of selected maps*

Yılı	Ölçek	Müellif	İsim
1858	1/2000	G. d'Ostoya	Plan général de Galata Péra et Pancalti
1905	1/600	Charles E. Goad	Plan d'assurance de Constantinople. Vol. II - Péra & Galata(24-45)-
1944	1/2000	Alfons Marie Schneider-Miltiadis Isaak Nomidis-	Galata, topographisch-archaologischer plan mit erlauterndem text-
1986		J.L. Arnaud	İstanbul-Galata 1970

26
27 The study was limited to the side of Galata facing the Golden Horn and the
 28 coastal settlement within the city walls was addressed. In this direction, the study
 29 area is surrounded by the Atatürk Bridge to the west, Kılıç Ali Paşa Street to the
 30 east, and Tersane Street and Mumhane Street to the north.

31 32 **Findings**

33
34 Galata is in Istanbul, at the northern entrance of the Golden Horn, southwest of
 35 the Bosphorus (Figure 1). Historically, it has served as a significant port settlement,
 36 both regionally and internationally. Its coastal access to the Golden Horn and the
 37 Bosphorus provided Galata with many natural piers, while the fan-shaped
 38 topography surrounding the ports along the coast allowed the settlement to expand

1 along the ridgeline into the hills.

2

3 **Figure 1.** Location of Galata Region



4

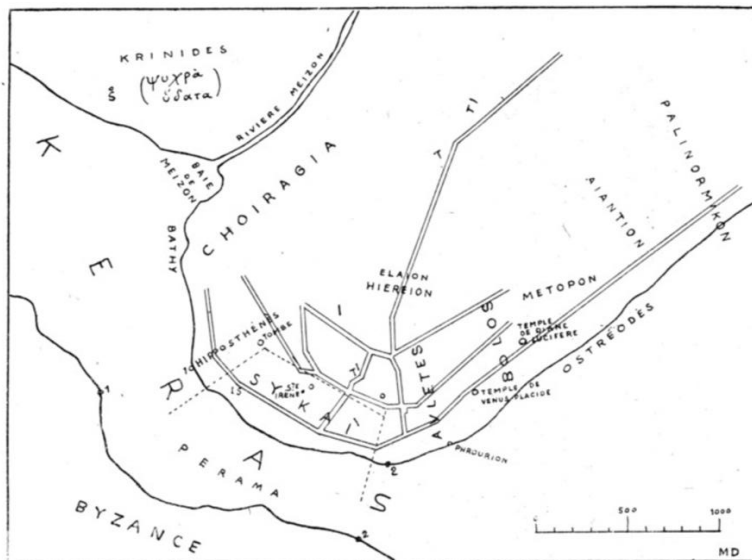
5 Source: Created by author 1 via Google maps

6

7 It is known that in Galata, in the 7th century BC, there was a port called "Hupo
8 te Suke," and immediately behind it a settlement called "Sykæ" (d'Alessio, 1946;
9 Herodotos, 2006). Strabon (2000), notes the existence of a port at present-day
10 Karaköy dock in 50 BC. The earliest urban representations from the 5th century
11 suggest the existence of a settlement named Sykai in Galata, featuring a principal
12 street with columns at sea level and a dock. This public route is currently referred to
13 as Tersane Street (d'Alessio, 1946) (Figure 2). Perşembe Pazarı Street, Mumhane
14 Street, and Voyvoda Street coincide with the thoroughfares referenced in antiquity
15 (Glysus, 2007).

16

17 **Figure 2.** Galata in 5th Century



GALATA ET SES ENVIRONS DANS L'ANTIQUITÉ
I = Inscriptions. - S = Sculptures. - T = Tombeaux. - O = Emplacement supposé des temples.
* = Anciennes artères (II^e siècle de notre ère)

18

19 Source: d'Alessio, 1946

1 During the Middle Ages, Genoa emerged as a hub of international commerce,
 2 creating an extensive trading network that encompassed the Mediterranean, Aegean,
 3 Marmara, and Black Seas, while also founding colonies in the port cities within this
 4 network (Nicol, 2000). The colony cities founded by the Genoese transformed the
 5 Mediterranean into a commercial center and a primary locus of cultural exchange.
 6 With an agreement made in 1267, the Genoese developed this trade network with
 7 their colonies in the Mediterranean and Black Seas, centered on Galata. During this
 8 period, Galata became an important transit point and a dynamic diplomatic center
 9 (Eyice, 1969; Kuban, 1996; Vasilev, 1958).

10 Fortifications encircled Galata, as they did with several settlements in the
 11 Mediterranean area (Camiz and Verdiani, 2016). The Genoese constructed a wall
 12 system in Galata from 1316 to 1453 to extend their colonies. The Genoese
 13 constructed the wall system based on remnants of walls erected in 296 and 528,
 14 adhering to the existing defensive lines (Kuban, 1996). The initial privileged zone,
 15 enclosed by walls, encompassed an area beginning at the coastline and extended to
 16 Voyvoda (Banks) Street, including Karaköy Square (Eyice, 1969). The wall gates
 17 of this period established a direct connection with Perşembe Pazarı and Tersane
 18 streets (Sağlam, 2020). Consequently, we can regard these two avenues as the
 19 principal axis of the former urban structure. These streets serve as the principal
 20 conduits for Galata's commercial and transit network, owing to their connections
 21 with the ports.

22 The collapse of the Eastern Roman Empire in 1453 was a turning point for
 23 Galata, and the Genoese continued their economic activities under Ottoman rule as
 24 an autonomous commune under the name "Magnifica Communità di Pera" until
 25 1805 (Akıncı, 2021). Throughout this period, Galata preserved its commercial
 26 character, leading to the construction of inns and caravanserais in the area (Mantran,
 27 1979). During the 18th century, the density of commercial buildings, offices,
 28 warehouses, and shops on Voyvoda Street escalated, hence maintaining the region's
 29 economic significance (Akın, 2002). In the same period, structures designed with
 30 the architectural plans and facades characteristic of European commercial buildings
 31 influenced the urban fabric of Galata.

32 *Setting Period-(Ancient Age-1800)/ 1860 Plan général de Galata Péra et Pancalti*

33
 34
 35 The initial settlement of port cities concentrated on commercial edifices and
 36 open markets established directly on the ports or in their vicinity (Hein 2011, 2016,
 37 2018; Schubert 2018, Rossetto Ribeiro et al., 2021). The Plan général de Galata Péra
 38 et Pancalti Map, produced between 1858 and 1860, illustrates the urban configuration
 39 of the Galata District, reflecting the port-trade requirements of that era.

40 d'Ostoya developed the Plan général de Galata Péra et Pancalti Map to meet the
 41 municipality's need for a cadastral plan (Figure 3). The map, scaled at 1/2000,
 42 depicts the urban configuration prior to the Great Pera Fire of 1870 (Özbay Kınacı
 43 et al., 2021). The map also records the historical road network, including dead-end
 44 streets and the former coastline prior to any land reclamation, the demolition of the
 45 city walls in 1864, and later urban design initiatives.

46

1 **Figure 3.** *1860 Plan général de Galata Péra et Pancalti with walls*



2
3 Source: Salt Research, 2024

4
5 Galata is a city characterized by walls and towers that bear traces of
6 Mediterranean architecture. These walls both served a defensive function and
7 formed a framework that organized the city's social and commercial activities. As
8 the city developed, the walls likewise increased, and this growth facilitated Galata's
9 dynamic and adaptable urban development. The d'Ostoya Map indicates that the
10 walls along Bankalar Street on the southern boundary of the first expansion zone
11 and those along Karaköy Street on the western boundary were omitted, while the
12 remaining walls were fully retained (Figure 3).

13 The relationships among the city gates, piers, and commerce structures are
14 prominent on the d'Ostoya Map. A port connects every gate leading to the Golden
15 Horn shoreline. Trade, customs, and census activities occur at these gates. The lanes
16 surrounding the city gates have been designated as zones for artisans and traders. In
17 this setting, the city gates have emerged as a major focal point of the economy. The
18 gates linked to the port on the map include Azap Gate, Adı Meçhul Gate, Kürkçü
19 Gate, Yağ Kapanı Gate, Balık Pazarı Gate, and Karaköy Gate, which connect the
20 steep streets from Tersane Street to the waterfront (Figure 4). Perşembe Pazarı
21 Street, which connects Yağ Kapanı Gate to the Galata Tower, has significantly
22 contributed to regional economic continuity as a trading center during both the
23 Genoese and Ottoman eras. The Karaköy Gate provides access to Karaköy Square.
24 The spatial modification of Karaköy Square commenced with the establishment of
25 banks by Western nations subsequent to the international trade agreements in 1838,
26 alongside the escalation of transportation and commerce in the area (Orçun
27 Kafesçioğlu, 2016). The Sixth Department Municipality organized the area where
28 Karaköy Street meets the seaside into a square. The destruction of Karaköy Gate in
29 1857-58 facilitated the enlargement of Karaköy Square (Okur, 2011). The northern
30 gates of the neighborhood are designated as Kurşunlu Mahzen Gate, Yeni Gate,
31 Mumhane Gate, Kireç Gate, and Eğri Gate, linking to Mumhane Street (Arseven,
32 1989). Mumhane Street, formerly known as "Çöplük İskeleyi Sokak," is situated
33 along a route where fishing activities occurred (d'Alessio, 1946). This roadway was
34 not one of the main transportation routes in the region during that period.

1 **Figure 4.** *The port wall in d'Ostoya Map*

2
3 Source: Created by author 1 via d'Ostoya Map

4
5 On the D'ostoya Map, commercial edifices, storage facilities, and inns are
6 enumerated behind the piers. Among these edifices, Yelkenciler Han is especially
7 notable. Constructed in the 1640s between Kürkçü Gate and Yağkapanı Gate, near
8 to the city walls, the inn is a significant commercial edifice of the era. The structure
9 features a courtyard plan design that facilitates integrated use with Yelkenciler
10 Street. Kurşunlu Han and Galata Bedesteni are linked to Yağkapanı Gate (Figure
11 5), facilitating an economic nexus between the interior of Galata and the coastal port
12 and warehouses. Constructed between 1544 and 1550, Kurşunlu Han is a two-story
13 edifice encircled by arched porticoes surrounding a courtyard. A four-armed
14 staircase situated within the courtyard provides access to the upper floor. The
15 construction, oriented along the east-west axis, is situated near to the city walls on
16 the southern side. Havyar Han and Komisyon Han are the edifices adjacent to
17 Karaköy Square (Figure 6). Havyar Han is an organically developed space within
18 the city limits, whereas Komisyonu Han exemplifies early modern architectural
19 structures (Orçun Kafesçioğlu, 2016). The two customs edifices constructed
20 between Kılıç Ali Paşa Street and Karaköy Street bolster port commerce (Orçun
21 Kafesçioğlu, 2016). Furthermore, it is linked to the Cite Française Kireç gate
22 constructed in 1860.

23
24 **Figure 5.** *The Kurşunlu Khan, Yelkenciler Khan, Galata Bedesten in d'Ostoya Map*

25

1 **Figure .** *The Komisyon Khan, Havyar Khan in d'Ostoya Map*



2
3

4 *Expansion Period (1800 -1900) /1905 Plan d'assurance de Constantinople*

5
6 The growth process of port cities is typically linked to the transformations
7 initiated by the industrial revolution. Throughout this period, port-related activity
8 encompassed industrial operations as well. Generally, there was an expansion of
9 docks, piers, and warehouses. (Hein 2011, 2016, 2018; Schubert, 2018). Moreover,
10 numerous administrative bodies were instituted to guarantee urban governance,
11 legislation was implemented, and extensive urban planning initiatives were
12 conducted. The insurance maps created by C. E. Goad in 1905, *Plan d'assurance de*
13 *Constantinople* (1/600 scale) (Figure 7), are significant as they illustrate the effects
14 of extensive urban planning initiatives undertaken in Galata during the first half of
15 the 19th century on the city's configuration.

16

17 **Figure 7.** *1905 Plan d'assurance de Constantinople*



18
19

Source: Salt Research, 2024

1 The 6th Department Municipality was the inaugural municipality founded
2 within the Ottoman Empire in 1857, adhering to European principles. The 6.th
3 Department Municipality's most drastic action was the destruction of the Galata
4 walls. The Goad Map illustrates the damage inflicted on the walls following the
5 decision to dismantle them in 1864. During this period, a significant portion of the
6 outer walls and coastal walls was dismantled (Figure 7).

7 Significant alterations on the Goad Map have occurred in the transportation
8 infrastructure and roadways, accompanied by extensive road expansion initiatives.
9 The region's organic road configuration, featuring several dead-end streets, has
10 evolved into a design comprising two primary arteries oriented east-west, along with
11 secondary roads linked to them (Özbay Kınacı et al., 2021). During this process,
12 streets including Grande Galata Street (Grande Rue de Galata), Yorgancılar Street
13 (Rue de Yorghandjilar), Yenikapı, Şişhane, and Büyük Hendek were established.
14 Furthermore, Yüksek Kaldırım Street, linking Karaköy to the Galata Tower, has
15 been renovated (Özbay Kınacı et al., 2021). Following the demolition of the city
16 walls, a series of urban modifications were implemented on Mumhane Street (Orçun
17 Kafesçioğlu, 2016), with Gümrük Street and Mumhane Gate emerging as the
18 principal access points along the former coastline. The Kurşunlu Mahzen Gate
19 serves as the point where Gümrük Street and Mumhane Gate converge with the sea.

20 Furthermore, the port in the vicinity was filled, and Rıhtımlar Street was
21 inaugurated in the reclaimed space. The construction of the Galata Bridge
22 commenced in 1845, coinciding with the rise in economic activities in Galata (Çelik,
23 2016). The bridge links to Karaköy Square. The location of the Komisyonu Han
24 was altered due to new transportation infrastructure, resulting in the reconstruction
25 of the building as a single level (Orçun Kafesçioğlu, 2016).

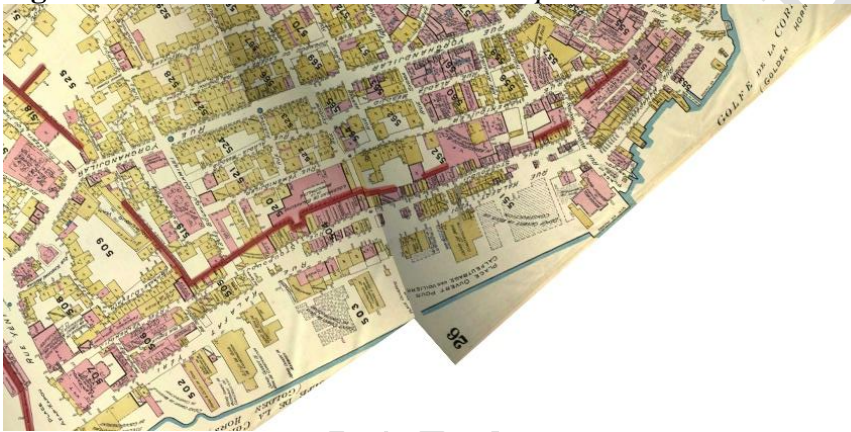
26 On the 1905 map, Kurşunlu Han, Galata Bedesten, and Yelkenciler Han retain
27 their original architectural layouts and commercial purposes (Figure 8). Land
28 reclamation along the shoreline led to the expansion of the pier areas, resulting in a
29 more structured coastal character. This transition enhanced business operations in
30 the region and stimulated new construction. Particularly in the region between
31 Kalafatçılar Street and the coastline, the newly constructed edifices predominantly
32 comprise warehouses and small commercial establishments (Figure 9). This
33 scenario underscores the significance of commerce and storage roles within the
34 urban structure of the era, closely linked to the region's economic activities.

35
36

1 **Figure 8.** *The Kurşunlu Khan, Yelkenciler Khan, Galata Bedesten in 1905 Goad*
 2 *Map*

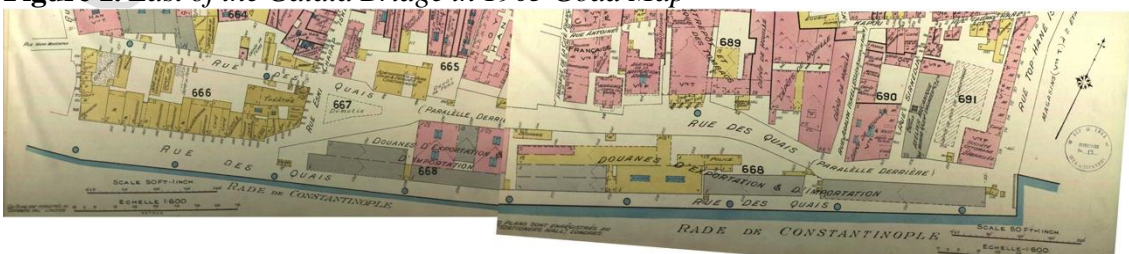


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 4
 5 **Figure 9.** *Costal Texture in 1905 Goad Map*



6
 7
 8 A fill area was established to the east of the Galata Bridge (Figure 10), replacing
 9 the former coastal structures, and a customs port was situated within this site.
 10 Furthermore, the roles of the antiquated customs edifices transformed and
 11 commenced use as storage facilities. The port administration building, health and
 12 quarantine facilities, marine offices, social structures, Constantinople Port, customs
 13 and coastal administration buildings, and the import and export customs building
 14 are prominently located in the freshly filled dock (Orçun Kafesçioğlu, 2016).
 15

16 **Figure 1.** *East of the Galata Bridge in 1905 Goad Map*



17
 18
 19

1 *Specialization Period – (1900-1950)/1944 Galata, topographisch-archaologischer*
2 *plan mit erlauerndem text*

3

4 Throughout the specialization period, port facilities experienced substantial
5 modifications to accommodate large cargo vessels, container ships, oil tankers, and
6 transports for grain and ore. More substantial vessels necessitated seabed excavation
7 and/or the establishment of extensive new piers to ensure enough water depth. In
8 some instances, these new mandates necessitated the relocation of port activities
9 from their original sites (Hein 2011, 2016, 2018; Schubert 2018).

10 The declaration of the Republic on October 29, 1923, was a decisive turning
11 point for the Republic of Turkey; radical political and socio-cultural transformations
12 took place with the Republic. These reforms promoted the adoption of contemporary
13 and scientific methodologies in urban planning research and established the foundation
14 of modern Turkish infrastructure. In this context, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk assigned
15 the responsibility of urban planning for Istanbul to French planner Henri Prost in
16 1936. Prost sought to modernize the city in accordance with the Republic's
17 Westernization objectives while simultaneously prioritizing the preservation of its
18 historical fabric. Prost's strategy was to maintain the operational integrity of the ports
19 and industrial areas in Galata and the Golden Horn while endeavoring to link the
20 two banks of the Golden Horn through the establishment of new squares and transit
21 lines and to emphasize economic advancement. (Bilsel, 2011; 2010; Aydemir, 2008;
22 Tekeli, 2021). Schneider and Nomidis' 1944 Topographic and Archaeological Plan
23 Map of Galata (Figure 11) is a detailed monograph that illustrates the spatial impacts
24 of the Prost Plan and the systematic urban planning techniques employed following
25 the Republic's declaration.

26 The 1944 map indicates that the outside and inner walls have been
27 predominantly obliterated. However, the sea walls from the western boundary of the
28 1st Expansion Zone to the Galata Bridge have remained relatively intact. The
29 section of the walls spanning from the Galata Bridge to the northwest, delineating
30 the western boundary of the 2nd Expansion Zone, has mostly endured, but the
31 structural integrity of the walls in other regions has been considerably compromised.
32 Within these regions, one can discern only remnants and vestiges at specific
33 locations.

34

1 **Figure 11.** *Topographic and Archaeological Plan Map of Galata*

2
3 Source: Salt Research, 2024
4

5 The 1944 map indicates a substantial rise in building along the shoreline
6 between the Atatürk Bridge and the Galata Bridge. In the area characterized by
7 extensive construction, particularly along the coastline, small-scale warehouses and
8 commercial structures situated between Kalafatçılar Street and Fermenciler Street
9 have been razed, replaced by large-scale factories and industrial facilities. The
10 proliferation of these facilities has limited access to Kalafatçılar Street, a main
11 thoroughfare adjacent to the coast, for the ports. This situation exemplifies a
12 transition process aligned with the Prost Plan's objective of maintaining the
13 functional integrity of industrial zones. Conversely, Kurşunlu Han, Yelkenciler
14 Han, and Galata Bedesten maintain their original architectural layouts.

15
16 *Regionalization Period – (1950-today)/1986-Istanbul-Galata 1970*
17

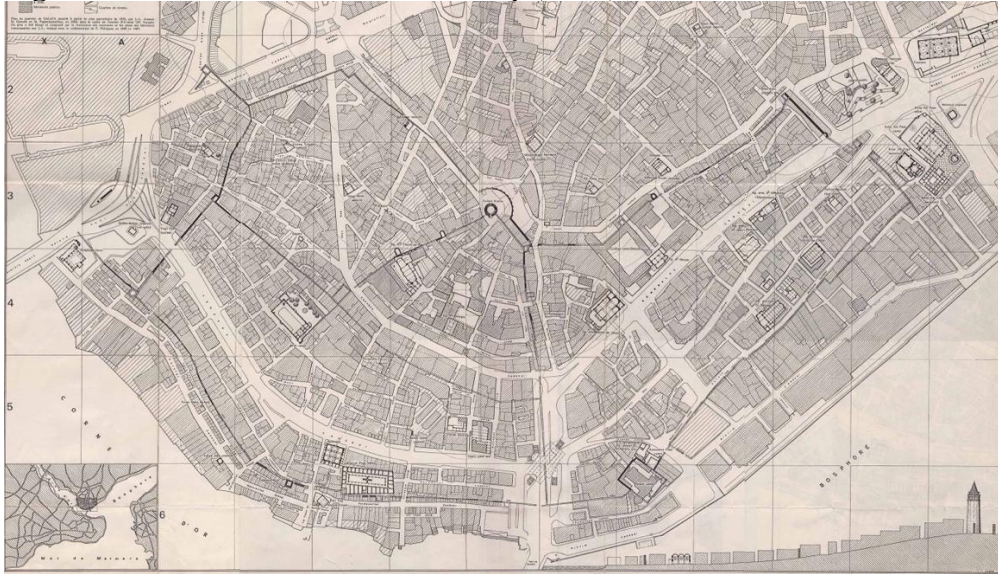
18 Regionalization is the most recent phase in the growth of port cities,
19 significantly influenced by pivotal transformations including globalization,
20 containerization, widespread motorization, and the transition from coal to oil. These
21 transformations have generated increased land requirements for the establishment
22 of refineries and transshipment facilities. The advent of larger and more automated
23 port terminals has displaced industrial operations and port facilities from urban
24 areas. The regions at the interfaces of the historic port cities have emerged as
25 appealing experimental zones for architects and urban planners (Hein 2011, 2016,
26 2018; Schubert 2018).

27 Post-1950, modernization efforts in Istanbul initiated the development of
28 industrialization. The city's burgeoning population and the prevalent usage of motor
29 vehicles emerged as significant factors of urbanization. During this decade, urban
30 development projects were predominantly confined to road extension and traffic
31 management (Tuna, 2019; Tekeli, 2021; Şahin, 2015; Gül, 2024). The map created
32 by M. Papatriafantafilou and J. L. Arnaud (1986) illustrates the physical configuration
33 of Galata in 1970 and depicts the impact of urbanization efforts from the 1950s on
34 its urban morphology. The map was created in monochrome on the plot plan with

1 scanning techniques. The map also includes ground floor layouts of significant
 2 cultural heritage structures and a section extending from the Galata Tower to sea
 3 level.

4

5 **Figure 12.** *The 1970 Istanbul-Galata Map (1986)*



6

7

Source: Salt Research, 2024

8

9 The demolitions associated with road construction in the 1950s inflicted
 10 damage on the extant sections of the walls, and the remaining portions of the
 11 seawalls have also been significantly dismantled. The remnants of this devastation
 12 are clearly observable on the map. According to the 1970 Istanbul-Galata Map, the
 13 parts of the walls descending from the Galata Tower to the northwest and the parts
 14 located on the eastern border of the 5th Expansion Region and the northern border
 15 of Tophane constitute the last remnants of the walls. Only a minuscule portion of
 16 the Galata Walls remains in incomplete remnants and fragments.

17 The expansion of Tersane and Kemeraltı Streets, along with the establishment
 18 of Karaköy Square, constitutes significant modifications that stand out on the map.
 19 The expansion and convergence of Tersane and Kemeraltı Streets markedly
 20 diminished the built-up area ratio, with Tersane Street's width increasing from 7
 21 meters to 30 meters and Kemeraltı Street's breadth from 7 meters to 21 meters. The
 22 newly constructed square that supplanted Karaköy Street encompasses an area of
 23 11,000 square meters and is 80 meters in width. During this time, Karaköy Square
 24 evolved into a transport hub, and the inauguration of the Karaköy underpass in 1964
 25 enhanced the square's role as a traffic junction (Orçun Kafesçioğlu, 2016). Refik
 26 Saydam Street, delineating the western boundary of the district, and Maliye Street,
 27 linking Kemeraltı Street to the coastline, are newly inaugurated thoroughfares in this
 28 development. Furthermore, the roadway was expanded by eliminating the stairs on
 29 the Yüksek Kaldırım roadway to accommodate vehicular traffic; nevertheless, this
 30 expansion resulted in the street becoming too steep.

31

32

The map indicates the existence of substantial industrial facilities situated south
 of Kalafatçılar Street and Fermenciler Street. Galata Bedesten and Kurşunlu Han

1 maintain their original architectural layouts, while Yelkenciler Han, although
2 retaining its courtyard typology, exhibits a severe deterioration in its spatial
3 arrangement. During the development of Karaköy Square, edifices like Komisyonu
4 Han, Azize Police Station (Seyrüsefain İdaresi), Galata Pier, and Havyar Han were
5 razed (Orçun Kafesçiğlu, 2016).

6 Post-1980, influenced by global neoliberal policies, the deindustrialization of
7 urban centers intensified, leading to the movement of port facilities to the
8 peripheries of the city. This shift resulted in the dismantling of industrial edifices in
9 Istanbul and the relocation of ports from the Golden Horn to Tuzla between 1984
10 and 1989. This has resulted in the erosion of industrial history along the Galata shore
11 and paved the way for fresh capital investments in the coastal area (Şen et al., 2024).
12 Efforts to terminate industrial activity on the Golden Horn persisted until 1994, after
13 which, in 1995, international initiatives were initiated to convert these regions into
14 centers for congress, culture, and the arts. The evolution of shipyards and ports
15 resulted in the recognition of these processes as a worldwide phenomenon (Butler,
16 2007). Since 2011, urban interventions along the Galata shoreline and the Golden
17 Horn area have underscored the impact of prior demolitions on spatial coherence.
18 Although the Haliç Metro Bridge, completed in 2012, aimed to solve transportation
19 challenges, it has permanently endangered the Golden Horn and Süleymaniye
20 silhouette and damaged cultural heritage sites such as the Galata Walls.

21 22 23 **Discussion**

24
25 The evolution of Galata as a port city has significantly influenced its social and
26 economic framework as well as its urban planning methodologies. This evolution
27 has become particularly apparent through fundamental urban components such as
28 walls, gates, roadways, and structures. The swift transition observed in the region
29 since the onset of the 19th century is directly attributable to the alteration of these
30 elements.

31 The walls of Galata are significant edifices that embody the area's historical and
32 defensive roles. Beginning in the mid-19th century, the 6th Department Municipality
33 resolved to dismantle the walls, resulting in their significant destruction. The Goad
34 Map illustrates the demolition of the walls subsequent to the decision made in 1864.
35 The removal of the walls reconfigured Galata's intra-city transit and commerce,
36 leading to the expansion of its transportation network and the development of new
37 highways and trade zones in the surrounding districts. The 1944 map distinctly
38 illustrates this alteration; a significant segment of the outer walls and coastal barriers
39 was dismantled, although the walls surrounding the Galata Tower were mostly
40 maintained. The losses incurred to establish new infrastructures and transit routes led
41 to the deterioration of the region's historical fabric.

42 The city gates and transit infrastructure in Galata were crucial to the economic
43 and cultural development of the area. In the 19th century, the efforts of the 6th
44 Department Municipality facilitated the transition from organic road textures to
45 broader and more uniform avenues, and the dismantling of the city walls resulted in
46 the establishment of new transportation arteries. The Goad Map illustrates this

1 transition process and depicts configurations including Büyük Galata Avenue,
 2 Yorgancılar Avenue, and Karaköy Square. The expansion of Yüksek Kaldırım
 3 Avenue enhanced transit between Galata and Karaköy, while simultaneously
 4 accentuating the avenue's severe gradient. Following the renovation initiatives post-
 5 1950, the widths of Tersane and Kemeraltı roads were expanded, Karaköy Square
 6 was transformed into a transportation hub spanning 11,000 square meters, and the
 7 inauguration of the Karaköy underpass in 1964 enhanced the area's role as a traffic
 8 nexus. Nonetheless, these road widening initiatives altered the spatial configuration
 9 of Galata, providing merely surface remedies and modifying the solid-void ratios.
 10 Projects like the Haliç Metro Bridge post-2011 illustrate the conflict between
 11 modernization and the preservation of historic heritage. This transition process alters
 12 the historical identity of Galata and exposes the enduring impacts of urban
 13 interventions on its spatial and cultural fabric.

14 The edifices in Galata significantly contributed to the formal metamorphosis of
 15 the city. While the Galata Bedesten and Kurşunlu Han retained their original
 16 architectural layouts, Yelkenciler Han showed signs of spatial degradation. The
 17 1905 insurance maps indicate that these edifices maintained their commercial roles,
 18 whereas other commercial constructions in the vicinity underwent swift
 19 transformations. The destruction of walls and the infilling of the shoreline resulted
 20 in the expansion of dock areas, particularly along Kalafatçılar Street and the
 21 waterfront, where warehouses and small commercial units proliferated, thereby
 22 enhancing economic activities. The transition is more pronounced on the 1944 map,
 23 as large-scale industrial complexes supplanted tiny commercial ones post-1950.
 24 Beginning in the 1980s, global neoliberal policies facilitated the relocation of
 25 industry from urban areas, resulting in the erosion of the industrial history along the
 26 Galata coast and the reconfiguration of the shoreline.

27 Galata's development serves as a microcosm of the substantial physical and
 28 social shifts experienced by Istanbul's port-city structure. It is a process that alters
 29 not just economic operations but also the social and cultural dynamics of the city.
 30 This procedure also illustrates the difficulties encountered in urban planning, the
 31 conservation of cultural assets, and the incorporation of contemporary life.
 32
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